

REMARKS:

- 1) In view of the accompanying Request for Continued Examination (RCE), the Final Status of the Office Action of November 4, 2009 shall be withdrawn, and the examination shall be continued based on the present amendments and remarks.
- 2) The Examiner's attention is directed to applicant's Second Information Disclosure Statement being filed together with the present Response. Please consider the IDS and the cited references, and return an initialed, signed and dated acknowledgment copy of the IDS Form PTO-1449 of February 3, 2010.
- 3) The claims have been amended as follows.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of prior claim 21.

Dependent claim 22 has been amended for proper dependency in view of the amendment of claims 17.

Claim 20 has been amended into independent form by incorporating the subject matter of prior claim 17 into claim 20.

Independent claim 35 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of prior claim 37.

Claims 21, 25 to 33 and 37 have been canceled.

New claims 38 to 44 have been added. The new claims are based on the previous claims as shown in the following table, and do not introduce any new matter.

new claims	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
original support	CI 26	CI 27	CI 30	CI 32	CI 33	CI 35 + 28	CI 31

These editorial amendments involving claim combinations do not introduce any new matter. Entry and consideration thereof are respectfully requested.

- 4) Referring to the bottom of page 5 and the top of page 6 of the Office Action, the indication of allowable subject matter in prior claims 20 to 23, 28 to 31 and 37 is appreciated. Allowable subject matter has now been incorporated in the remaining independent claims, as follows.

Independent claim 17 incorporates the allowable subject matter of prior claim 21. Thus, claim 17 and its dependent claims 18, 19, 22, 24 and 34 should now be allowable.

Claim 20 has been amended into independent form while maintaining its allowable subject matter. Therefore claim 20 and its dependent claim 23 should now be allowable.

Independent claim 35 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of prior claim 37. Therefore claim 35 and its dependent claims 36 and 38 to 42 should now be allowable.

New independent claim 43 combines the allowable subject matter of prior claim 28 with prior claim 35. While claim 28 had been dependent from claim 25, similar allowable subject matter is now represented in new independent claim 43. Also note that the allowable subject matter of claim 28 is similar to that of claim 20, which was further found allowable. Therefore, claim 43 and its dependent claim 44 should now be allowable.

- 5) Referring to pages 3 to 5 of the Office Action, the rejection of claims 17 to 19, 24 to 27 and 32 to 36 as obvious over Grieb in view of Junggren and Mulera et al. has been obviated by the present amendment. As discussed above, all of the remaining independent claims 17, 20, 35 and 43 now incorporate allowable subject matter from non-rejected prior claims 20, 21, 28 or 37. Thus, the obviousness rejection does not apply against any of the present remaining claims. Please withdraw the rejection.
- 6) Referring to the middle of page 6 of the Office Action, the additional prior art made of record requires no particular comments because it has not been applied against the claims.
- 7) Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, including all present claims 17 to 20, 22 to 24, 34 to 36 and 38 to 44, are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

WFF:ks/4933
Enclosures:
Postcard
Transmittal Cover Sheet
Request for Continued Examination
Form PTO-2038
IDS with Form PTO-1449
6 references

By Walter F. Fasse
Walter F. Fasse
Patent Attorney
Reg. No.: 36132
Tel. 207-862-4671
Fax. 207-862-4681
P.O. Box 726
Hampden, ME 04444-0726

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING:

I hereby certify that this correspondence with all indicated enclosures is being deposited with the U. S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first-class mail, in an envelope addressed to: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P.O. BOX 1450, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1450 on the date indicated below.

Walter F. Fasse 2/3/10
Name: Walter F. Fasse - Date: February 3, 2010